

THE DRAMATIC CENSOR ;

OR,

WEEKLY THEATRICAL REPORT.

NUMBER III. Saturday, January 18, 1800.

——— *Nec studium, sine divite vena,
Nec rude quid profit video ingenium : alterius sic
Altera poscit opem res, et conjurat amice.*

. Dramatic Writers, who desire to have an *early* Review of their Publications, are requested to send a copy to the Editor, at the Printing-Office,

DRURY-LANE, Friday, January 3, 1800.

PIZARRO. (*Sheridan.*) SHIPWRECK. (*S. Arnold.*)

THE unprecedented success and popularity of this motley piece, though in itself less calculated to promote the interests of legitimate drama, than to fill the treasury of Drury-Lane, may eventually prove productive of at least *one* beneficial effect to the cause of dramatic literature in general. The managers will no longer be able to avail themselves of the plea of Shakspeare's *Apothecary*, as their apology for *prostituting the Stage* ; and, however servile and temporizing may be the disposition of these caterers for the town, we entertain too high an opinion of the dignity of human nature, even in its degraded state, to

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suppose, that they would do that from *choice*, for which *necessity* is the only excuse that can possibly be offered. No longer exposed to the temptations of avarice by “a beggarly account of empty boxes”—they will not, we trust, be guilty of a *wanton* sacrifice of principle, and continue to debauch the public taste, by bringing forward a swarm of dramatic abortions, which possess no merit, but *novelty*; no source of attraction, except *scenery* and *sing-song*.

COVENT-GARDEN, *Friday, January 10, 1800.*

EVERY ONE HAS HIS FAULT. (*Mrs. Inchbald.*)

VOLCANO.

THERE is much merit in this Comedy; but the pleasure we received from its representation was not unmingled with sentiments of indignation and regret, when we reflected on the waste of talents the author has lately been guilty of, by stooping to the degrading task of *dress[ing]* Kotzebue's abortions. Possessed of a fund of native humour, to which that inflated German Play-wright has not the smallest pretensions, Mrs. INCHBALD equally excels in scenes of the pathetic cast; of which the several parts of *Mr. Irwin*, *Lady Eleanor*, *Lord Norland*, *Miss Wooburn*, young *Edward*, &c. furnish striking instances. *Mr. Harmony* is a pleasing character, not less entitled to admiration on the score of philanthropy, than for justness of delineation. *Sir Robert Ramble*, *Mr. Solus*, and the *Placids* bear evidence to her comic powers. And the
skill

skill with which she blends instruction with delight, and, whilst she tickles the fancy, impresses the most weighty truths on the mind, proves her as much Kotzebue's superior in *morality* as in *wit*.

We know not whether we may appear singular in our opinion, but we must confess, we were forcibly struck with the resemblance which *Mr. Irwin's* part bears to the leading incident in *Lovers' Vows*. In *Every one has his fault*, the son robs his father to relieve the necessities of a wife, reduced to extreme distress by the unrelenting austerity of her parent:—in *Lovers' Vows*, *Frederick* draws his sword upon his father, to save a beloved mother from perishing with hunger, whose misfortunes have originated in the perfidy of that father. And, to render this coincidence more glaringly striking, in both cases the crime of the son paves the way to a reconciliation between the parties, and proves the happy means of restoring the sufferers to favour, affluence and domestic felicity.

We might easily, were this the proper place for entering into a discussion of this kind, point out a number of similar instances of plagiarism, on the part of the German dramatist, so palpably notorious and gross, that even his warmest admirers would find it a difficult task to defend him from the charge. What is the *Abelard* and *Eloisa*-courtship of *Anbalt* and *Amelia Wildnbeain*;—the yielding softness of the lady, and the

the struggle between duty and inclination on the part of the gentleman?—what, but a copy of *Lionel* and *Clarissa*? But we forbear to expatiate on this topic at present; nor should we, indeed, have touched upon it on this occasion, were it not, that the extravagant patronage this German authorling has met with renders it an act of justice to the native genius of the country, to seize every opportunity of exposing his incapacity, his plagiarisms, and his dulness. And when the managers of our theatres, instead of cultivating the talents of our own writers, enter into an *actual conspiracy* against British genius, by * contracting with *foreign* scribblers for manuscript plays, which they import at a high price, though no use can be made of their vile productions, till they have undergone a complete metamorphosis (or to speak more technically, a *dress*ing) from the hands of some experienced English dramatist; for which a sum†equal to the purchase of original compositions must be paid.—when
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* The public prints inform us (we cannot pretend to say, on what authority) that a theatrical negotiation, of the first magnitude, is now on foot, between the managers of Drury-Lane, and this self-same Monsieur *Kotzebue*, for a regular supply of manuscript plays, which may be rendered *passable* on the English Stage, at twice the expence, and ten times the trouble in the transformation, of original Dramas by our own writers. MR. SHERIDAN'S name has been expressly mentioned, as the principal agent in this importation-contract.

† MRS. INCHBALD, we understand, received 500 Guineas from MR. HARRIS for dressing *The Wise Man of the East*.

such a system of theatrical *manufactureship* is pursued by those, who possess, like St. Peter, the *power of the keys*, and can *lock-out*, or *let-in* whomsoever they please ;—it becomes a duty of the first importance to canvas, and hold up to merited reprobation, the flimsy pretensions of these dramatic invaders. Kotzebue with all his mushroom celebrity, possesses (to judge from those of his plays, which have been brought forward upon the English stage) precisely the same claim to the title of a great dramatist, as a building-contractor might arrogate to the reputation of a great architect, because he furnishes the materials—the bricks, the lime, the timber, and a suitable proportion of old rubbish, from which skillful hands and an intelligent head are able to construct a fair and goodly mansion.

To prove, however, that national partiality has not rendered us blind to the errors and imperfections of our own writers, we shall take the liberty of pointing out a few grammatical blunders, and vulgarisms, which, we are sorry to observe, Mrs. INCHBALD suffers to disgrace her pen. Correctness of style, we should think, is an object so easily acquired, that it strikes us with astonishment, how any writer, much more writers of *reputed* celebrity, can be guilty of negligence, in this respect. But still more are we at a loss to conceive, by what strange infatuation persons who evince so little regard to idiomatic propriety, can gain credit with the town for
taste

taste and elegance of composition. As the inaccuracies of language, which we complain of in Mrs. INCHBALD's productions, have, unhappily, become prevalent, and, with very few exceptions, almost universal among dramatic writers, we shall briefly trace the leading faults of her style, for the benefit of the dramatic *corps*, in general, and as a salutary warning against the repetition of similar errors on a future occasion.

Among the list of grammatical blunders, in most frequent use with the common herd of authors, may justly be ranked the substitution of the conditional conjunction—*if*, for the interrogatory—*whether*:—the misapplication of the adverbs of place—*there*, instead of—*thither*—*where*, for—*whither*—*here* for—*hither* &c. the constant use of the *indicative*, instead of the *subjunctive* mood—e. g. *was*, for *were*—*is*, for *be*;—the confounding of *neuter* and *active* verbs;—lastly, *double* comparatives, and superlatives. Instances of errors of this kind, occur in almost every page of Mrs. INCHBALD's writings. In proof of this assertion, we shall just take a transient glance at the Comedy, which led to these remarks. In page 4 of *Every one has his fault*, we read: “Yes, Sir:—My lady asked just now if (*whether*) I knew, who was with you?”

This blunder we find repeated nearly a dozen times in the course of the work. Page 13 “My lady begs
to

to know, Sir, if (*whether*) you have invited Mr. Solus to dine?"

Page 46 "I asked him carelessly if (*whether*) it be true, &c.&c.

Whether, instead of *whither*—*here* for *hither*—*there* for *thither*, are errors continually obtruded upon us.

Page 17 "I must go, I know not where (*whither*) to which *Lady Elinor* makes reply: where (*whither*) would you go?"

Page 33 "May I ask, where (*whither*) you are going?"

Page 74 "Bring him here (*hither*)"

Page 76 Pray young man, what brought you here (*hither*)"

Page 83 "My lord, pray come here (*hither*) this moment."

Page 93 "Would neither of you undertake to bring me here (*hither*.)"

In page 53, and 54 the *indicative* constantly supplies the place of the *subjunctive* mood.

"If that is (*be*) all."

"And if he is (*be*) a man of my feelings."

"I know my heart, and if there was (*were*) any latent spark of love, I could not &c. &c."

The following quotations exhibit still more flagrant proofs of the writer's want of grammatical knowledge.

Page 17 "I would not lose the remembrance of you, or (*nor*) of them."

Page 20 "My wife and I did not live happy (*happily*) together."

Page

Page 66 “ You are hurt I see, lest the world should say she has forgot, (*forgotten*) you. This is a very common error with most authors; but not the less liable to censure, on account of its frequency. The mistake originates in the use of the *preterite* with the auxilliary verb, instead of the *participle*. The want of due attention to this circumstance occasions a similar blunder in the conjugation of the verb to *write*. Nothing is more common than to meet, both in conversation, and in print, with—*I have wrote*, instead of—*I have written*.

Mrs. INCHBALD has repeated this fault in page 69, 75, and 76.

Page 77, furnishes an instance of the double comparative: “ Justice holds its place among those cardinal virtues, which include all the *lesser*.”

In Page 87 the *accusative* case is substituted instead of the *nominative*: “ No one shall receive a lesson from you, but me (*I, or myself*.”)

In page 96, Mrs. INCHBALD makes use of a *neuter* verb, instead of a verb *active*. “ I will never cease to think you love me, nor ever *cease* my gratitude for your goodness.”

Page 102, “ I was bid(*bade*) to tell you.”

But it were a tedious task to identify every instance of grammatical inaccuracy, which disfigures this performance. We shall therefore, to show that

we have not been guilty of random assertion, content ourselves with pointing out a few *colloquialisms*, and examples of *vulgar diction* and *tautology*, with the friendly view of holding up a beacon to others, which may, at once, apprize them of their danger, and the means of avoiding it.

Page 11. "Just by saying a few harmless sentences, which though a species of falsehood and deceit, yet *being* soothing and acceptable, &c." There is no proper conclusion of the *parenthetical* sentence, which commences with the words—"yet being."

Page 21. You must know, we were married in Scotland, and by the laws *there*, a wife can divorce, &c."—How easily might this sentence be improved, with respect to elegance of style, by the simple addition of two words? By substituting, instead of the vague, indefinite adverb *there*—the laws *of that country*?

Page 23. "You have often lamented not being married!"—The ellipsis in this sentence is too glaring—"You have often lamented, *that you were* not married, &c." would read much better.

Page 23. "Is it not very common to be rich, without money? *Are* not half the town rich? And yet half the town *has* no money?"—We give the author her option of the singular and plural number, but let her adhere to her choice.

Page 78. "I should not be surprized were you go in search of this culprit and his family, and

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come to me to intreat me to *fore-go* the prosecution." This is *wanton* tautology.

Page 80. "Was ever man in such confusion *before* his wife?" Vaguely expressed—"in the *presence* of his wife," would be much better.

———"Whatever *pretence* may have induced you, &c." This passage affords a striking instance of the indefinite style of writing. A *pretence* can never induce a man to any act whatever; he must have a *motive*; pretence is the *disguisement* of that motive; it has no influence on his own mind, and is only made use of to conceal his real motives from the penetrating scrutiny of others.

Page 93. "In a mind so distracted as mine, it is cruel to excite *one* additional *pain*." This we will charitably suppose to be a *typographical* error. It is not common to talk of pain by *number*—one, two and three—*pang* is the proper word.

Page 97. "I came too see my father—I have a house too full of such as *he* (meaning her son Edward) already". The phrase "*such as he*" is much too vulgar for the character of *Lady Eleanor*, addressing herself to *Lord Norland*.

Page 100. "I would comply with the most extravagant of his desires, and suffer his cruelty to be *the death of me*." This passage, with respect to vulgar and colloquial diction, stands in the same predicament with the preceding quotation. The elegant and accomplished *Miss Wooburn* ought not to speak in the style of an illiterate servant-maid. Dramatic

writers

writers should never lose sight of the *Horatian* precept.

Reddere personæ scit convenientia cuique.

But we forbear to expatiate farther on the defects of Mrs. INCHBALD's style, as our design is not so much to expose the inadvertencies of that lady, as to set other writers on their guard against committing similar errors. Did Mrs. INCHBALD rank in our estimation with the common herd of play-wrights and brainless manufacturers of insipid *Operas*, and *sing-song-afterpieces*, which offer *sound* as an apology for the want of *sense*, we should not have given ourselves the trouble to analyze her productions.

DRURY-LANE, *Saturday, Jan. 11, 1800.*

The STRANGER. (Altered from *Kotzebue*.)—The FOLLIES OF A DAY: (T. Holcroft.)

The interest of this play, in the representation, rests entirely with Mr. KEMBLE, and Mrs. SIDDONS. We shall have an opportunity of canvassing its intrinsic merit, as a dramatic composition, when we enter upon our promised Review of the GERMAN THEATRE, which commences with this Tragedy.

Miss DE CAMP in the after-piece, appears to great advantage in the character of the *Page*. She is full of animation, sprightliness, and gaiety.

COVENT-

COVENT-GARDEN, *Friday, Jan. 14, 1800.*

ABROAD, AND AT HOME. (*J. G. Holman.*) VOLCANO.

It would justly subject us to the imputation of *hyper-criticism*, were we to institute a rigid and fastidious scrutiny into the merits of this operatic performance. Though we cannot rank it in the class of works which evince superior genius, it certainly may lay claim to the praise of sprightliness, and as much humour, as generally falls to the lot of this species of dramatic composition. Regularity of plot, and faithful delineation of character—

——*servetur ad imum*

Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet.

are objects not to be looked for in *Farce*, under which denomination we include all pieces of a similar description, with *Abroad and at Home*.

But, though we are willing to make every fair allowance for the want of due concatenation of the several component parts, and ingenious development of fable, we cannot refrain from expressing our astonishment, that a gentleman, with Mr. HOLMAN'S opportunities of information, should be guilty of the same grammatical blunders, which we took occasion to animadvert upon in our strictures on *Every one has his Fault*. He substitutes *if* for *whether*; *here* for

for *hither*; *where* for *whither* &c. and confounds the *imperfect* with the *participle*, as freely as any of his brother-authors, who have never enjoyed the advantages of a college-education--instances of which may be seen by referring to pages 18, 25, 26, 29, 37, 59, 70, 73, 74, 86, of the printed copy of *Abroad, and at Home*.

The songs, likewise, in this *Opera*, though passable enough in the representation, when supported by the powerful aid of music, buffoonery and grimace, are not calculated, on perusal, to raise Mr. HOLMAN's poetical character above the level of a *versifier*. They seldom reach, and never surpass, *mediocrity* of talents; and Mr. HOLMAN, we are persuaded, is too good a classical scholar, not to be aware that

——MEDIOCRIBUS *esse poetis,*
Non Di, non homines, non concessere columnæ.

The best-written song in the whole piece, is the Air in the third Scene of the First Act, which Mr. INCLEDON, as *Harcourt*, gave with inimitable sweetness, and the happiest effect.

As the characters in themselves, are avowedly *outré* and extravagant, it must naturally be expected, that the performers should considerably *over-act*
their

their parts. Granting this indulgence, Mess. MUNDEN, FAWCETT and EMERY are entitled to the praise of having acquitted themselves with much comic humour. But SIMMONS, as *Dicky*, by no means met our approbation. His delineation of the *pseudo* Foreign Count was too gross a *caricature*, to carry on the deception, which the fable requires should succeed in imposing on *Old Sir Simon*. Amidst all the vulgarity supposed to attach to his character, as tipstaff of the King's bench, he should discover a visible affectation of gentility, not a wanton coarseness and depravity of manners, beneath the level of his ordinary deportment.

Mr. KNIGHT's performance of *Young Testy* was distinguished by *richness*, yet at the same time *chasteness* of humour. This gentleman only wants a fair opportunity of displaying his powers, to eclipse certain favourites of the town in their *own line of acting*. Mr. JOHNSTONE's *Capt. O'Neil*, likewise, deserves to be mentioned in terms of commendation.

Mrs. MARTYR plays the part of *Kitty* with spirit and ability. Of Mrs. ATKINS's performance, as *Miss Hartley*, we shall only remark, that she sings well; but on the stage ought only to be *heard*, not *seen*. Mrs. LITCHFIELD was passable as *Lady Flourish*; but the part ought to have been consigned to other hands.

DRURY-

DRURY-LANE, Monday, Jan. 13, 1800.
HAMLET, (*Shakespeare*). LODOISKA, (*J. P. Kemble*).

The play is SHAKESPEARE'S, and the acting KEMBLE'S—the merits of both in their respective line, as author and performer, rise to the highest possible pitch of human excellence. The crowded houses, therefore, which the representation of this Tragedy never fails to attract, at Drury-Lane, may be considered as a favourable augury, that good sense and genuine dramatic taste, have not bade a final farewell to the Stage.

Mr. C. KEMBLE must pardon us, if we take the liberty of reminding him of a certain bad habit he has (in common with but too many of his *brother*—and, we might add—*sister*-performers), of taking a survey of the audience, and more especially of his *fair* friends in the boxes; instead of watching, as propriety requires, the effect of his speech on the party to whom his words are addressed. This custom, which owes its rise entirely to *vanity*, and that inordinate thirst for *admiration*, which characterises a weak mind.

*Nil admirari prope res est una, Numici,
Solaque quæ possit facere, et servare, beatum.*

“For fools *admire*, but men of sense *approve*”
ought to be studiously avoided by every performer,
who

who wishes to obtain the approbation of men of taste and judgment. This remark, we wish it to be distinctly understood, does not apply *exclusively* to Mr. C. KEMBLE, but to the *major-part* of the dramatic *corps*, at both houses. Our sole reason for introducing it on this occasion, is the marked contrast, which such a line of conduct exhibits on the part of the *younger* KEMBLE, when performing in the same piece with his *elder* Brother. If the gentlemen and ladies of Drury-Lane, would take the trouble diligently to watch the manner of J. P. KEMBLE ; if they would observe the motion of his eyes, his looks immoveably rivetted for a considerable space of time, upon *vacancy* itself, when the person whom he has been addressing, retires behind the scenes ; and the scrutinizing glance, with which he searches the very soul of his partner in the dialogue, whilst they continue in conversation ; if they would pay attention to living precept—they would instantly be convinced of the impropriety of a conduct, which misses even the end they have themselves in view. There is, as the wise man justly observes, “a season for all things ;” and the smiles and careffes of Beauty may be more advantageously courted in *private* than in *public*.

Having touched upon this subject, we must beg leave to enforce the hint upon a lady of great dramatic celebrity, particularly interested in the general application of our remarks, though she does not perform

perform on this occasion. Mrs. SIDDONS is in the constant habit of *turning her back* upon the person whom she addresses, the moment she concludes her speech. Probably she may be of opinion, that this gives an air of greater dignity to her performance ; but let her rest assured, that the eye of taste will never discover dignity in the violation of propriety.

COVENT-GARDEN, *Monday, Jan. 13, 1800.*

A CURE FOR THE HEART-ACHE. (*Morton.*) VOLCANO.

If to blend instruction with delight be, as most unquestionably it is, the true aim and object of the stage, Mr. MORTON, (though we cannot pronounce his pieces faultless, and invulnerable to the shafts of criticism) may, however, justly lay claim to the merit of having furnished the public, in the play now under consideration, with no mean stock of *rational* amusement, accompanied with, and forcibly impressing upon the mind, the most wholesome and weighty moral lesson. As little bigotted to arbitrary rules of dramatic composition, as to arbitrary rules of faith, we shall never lend our suffrage and co-operation to enslave genius in the trammels of scholastic prescription ; nor seek to restrict the sallies of fancy to the narrow limits, which pedants would fain assign. As long as there is a visible connexion of the several parts of the fable ; as long as the plot

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is consistently managed, and the final object in view, or *denouement*, is effected by a regular train of incidents, naturally originating out of, and mutually promoting, each other ;—as long as these essential requisites are duly complied with, we can easily pardon a few eccentricities, and occasional *extravagancies*, which, if brought to the test of rigid criticism, would, it must be confessed, rank rather as *Farce* than legitimate *Comedy*.

We are well aware, that it is with dramatic composition, as with painting ;—much easier to give a *caricature* than a *faithful and accurate delineation* of life ;—much easier to catch at broad humour, than to please by the indefinable charms of delicate and refined wit :—and for this very reason, as we before remarked, we do not rate Mr. MORTON's talents in the class of superior genius. The grand excellence of dramatic writing consists in the perfect *preservation of character*, which must be a true transcript of Nature, in every varied and contrasted situation. 'Tis in this point of view, principally, that Mr. MORTON's comedies will be found defective. To give an example from the play before us, *Old Rapid*, who in the first acts is depicted as a silly dotard, with all the prejudices, all the meanness and vulgarity of low-life, by a sudden moral metamorphosis, commences philosopher, and deals forth sentiment
with

with the enthusiasm of a disciple of *Sterne* or *Rousseau*. Such abrupt transitions, for which no adequate efficient cause can be assigned, are not in the order of Nature. *Young Rapid*, likewise, is a *caricature*, not a *portrait*.

Yet with all these defects, we will venture to affirm, without any dread of impeaching our judgment, that a spectator of taste may derive more *rational* entertainment from the representation of this Comedy, than from any of the *German Dramas hitherto produced upon the English Stage. In the *Cure for the Heart-Ache*, there is no attempt to benumb the mental faculties, by fascinating the senses :—no tawdry scenes, no unmeaning sing-song, no heterogenous jumble of pantomime and tragedy,

* In our invectives against the importation and manufacture of German Plays, we could wish to be understood as alluding chiefly to the ill-digested, hasty, and bombastical productions of KOTZEBUE. The genius of SCHILLER is unquestionable; though Mr. HOLMAN has contrived to deform, disfigure, mutilate and mangle the most celebrated work of that great writer, in his *Red Cross Knights*. In the true spirit of modern *play-dressing*, he robs *The Robbers* of all their native excellence, and, by sinking whatever is *great* in the original, and inserting all the *trash* his own insipid fancy could suggest, has succeeded in reducing this beautiful play of SCHILLER's to the level of his own capacity. But a future opportunity will present, of bringing this *Theatrical Knight-Errant* to his purgations.

usurp the place of incident, and regular development of plot. It possesses sufficient comic force to exercise the risible propensities, and the moral it inculcates is of the purest and most impressive nature.

Having already remarked, that several of the *Dramatis Personæ* border upon *caricature* and *farce*, the performers have a rightful claim to some degree of indulgence, if they *over-act* their part. This plea particularly operates in favour of the *Rapids*. Mr. LEWIS displayed his accustomed sprightliness and humour (in characters of this cast he has not his rival at this theatre) but reminded us too much of the *perpetual motion*.

Mr. MUNDEN stands in need of the same apology for throwing too much buffoonery and grimace into his performance.

Sir *Hubert Stanley* was sustained with dignity and feeling by Mr. MURRAY. The part of *Charles Stanley* this night devolved upon Mr. CLAREMONT. It were to be wished this gentleman would suffer the austerity of his features to relax, when he acts the lover. A continual frown ill accords with the soft workings of the tender passion.

Mr. FAWCETT personated *Frank Oatlands* with judgment and ability. His performance was at
once

once *spirited* and *chaste*. We expressly notice the latter quality, as this gentleman is but too frequently apt to transgress in this respect.

The amiable and interesting character of *Jessy Oatlands* was allotted to Miss MURRAY; and in better hands the part could not easily have been placed. This charming actress gains upon the public favour with each repeated appearance. Gifted by nature with superior talents, she can scarcely fail, under the auspices of so consummate a judge, both in theory and practice, as her own father, to arrive at excellence. It is to be hoped, that the *Apostacy from Nature*, of which a sister-performer at this theatre furnishes a lamentable instance, will serve as a wholesome *memento*, to deter her from forsaking the path of simplicity.

Miss CHAPMAN, as *Ellen Vortex*, evinced a suitable degree of sensibility and feeling.

Mrs. MATTOCKS's flippancy may please some persons; but we, for our part, would never wish to see her in any other characters, than pert chambermaids, and vulgar house-wives.

DRURY.

DRURY-LANE, *Tuesday, Jan. 14, 1800.*

PIZARRO. (*Sheridan.*)—The LIAR. (*S. Foote.*)

The part of *Old Wilding*, in the Entertainment, was respectably filled by Mr. ARCHER. Mr. POWELL was not so successful in his delineation of *Young Harry*.

COVENT-GARDEN, *Tuesday, Jan. 14, 1800.*

The BIRTH-DAY. The HORSE AND THE WIDOW.

(*Both altered from Kotzebue, by T. Dibdin.*)—VOLCANO.

We may probably take a future opportunity of offering some critical remarks on the dialogue of this play, with respect to style, and grammatical propriety.

DRURY-LANE, *Wednesday, Jan. 15, 1800.*

The WILL. (*J. Reynolds.*)—LODOISKA.

This Comedy bears the characteristic features of Mr. REYNOLDS's Dramatic Muse: But the limits of our publication will not permit us to enter this week into an investigation of its merits.

Sir Solomon Cynic, originally Mr. KING's part, found in Mr. DOWTON a representative of much promise in scenes, which require a vein of dry humour. Mr POWELL appeared in the character of *Mandeville*, and Miss DE CAMP, as *Albina*, had a fair opportunity of displaying to advantage her talents in the walk of genteel comedy. She personated the sea-officer *Herbert*, with spirit, vivacity, and a becoming degree of assurance.

COVENT-GARDEN, *Wednesday, Jan. 15, 1800.*

THE WISE MAN OF THE EAST. (*Manufactured from Kotzebue, by Mrs. Inchbald.*)—VOLCANO.

The performances of this evening were dictated by Royal command. As this flattering mark of distinction, conferred a second time upon the *Wise Man*, must, of course, influence the public opinion, in no inconsiderable degree, in favour of the New Comedy, we embrace this opportunity of fulfilling the promise we gave in the first number of this work, to enter into a *comparative analysis* of its merits, considered as a dramatic production, in the first place; and, secondly, as an alteration from a foreign writer.

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The play, both in the Bills and the Title of the printed Copy, professes to be an adaptation from the German of Kotzebue ; and the Prologue expressly tells us, that Mrs. INCHBALD has very little concern in the fable and plot of the piece :

“ She begs to answer only for its *Dressing*.”

but, when we compare the literal translation of the German Original (published under the title of *The Writing Desk*) with Mrs. INCHBALD's improvements, we find, that she has not only allowed herself greater liberties, than the *mere Dresser* of a play can lay claim to ; but that she has, with very little exception, totally new modelled the plot ; and, what must prove most painful to her feelings, (if her feelings be not wholly blunted to the appeal of truth) that nearly all the objectionable features in the play are her own invention and super-addition. To show that we are not guilty of injustice in this harsh declaration, we shall pass the *Dramatis Personæ* of the New Comedy in regular view.

For this purpose we shall begin with the disgraceful scenes in the *under-plot*, (in which the respectable society of quakers are wantonly and illiberally held up to public ridicule and reprobation), as more justly entitled to censure and rebuke than any other part of the play. In the original, a similar conspiracy is set on foot for entrapping the young merchant

merchant in the matrimonial snare; but Kotzebue has evinced a degree of judgment, in this part of his plot, which his *dresser* has totally lost sight of. In the original, an artful *woman of the world*, a lady, who has been hacknied in the ways of fashionable vice, is the prime agent in the plot—a person whose rank and situation in life were calculated, at once to encourage the visits of her intended dupe, and at the same time, to set her above the suspicion of the mean practices, to which she has recourse. In the *Wise Man of the East*, on the other hand, no satisfactory reason is assigned, to account for the intimacy between a gay, dissipated young man of fashion like *Claransforth*, and the prim family of the *Starches*. The whole is a scene of mystery, obscenity, and matchless absurdity. Yet, such is the frowardness of human nature, that Mrs. INCHBALD, we are informed, plumes herself more upon her *Quakers*, than on any of her pretended improvements.

Ava Thoanoa, or *The Wise Man himself*, constitutes the next subject of discussion. In the original, we are introduced to a reputed Conjuror, who acts the usual farce of this discription of impostors; but being detected in his schemes, by the intervention of *Ensign Erten*, (the prototype of *Ensign Metland*) incurs the risk of being delivered over to the officers of the police—a danger from which he is relieved by the generosity of the young merchant whose cre-

N

dulity

dulity he has abused. The strange *farrago* of nonsense and inconsistency, in the character of *Ava Thoanoa*, is to be placed entirely to the credit of Mrs. INCHBALD.

Dittbelm, the young Merchant, whose character is paroded in *The Wise Man of the East*, under the name of *Claransforth*, is in the original a pattern of every virtue that ennobles human nature. It remained for the *wonder-working* talents of Mrs. INCHBALD to transform the *hero* of her play into a *fiend*, and blacken him with every vice of which humanity is capable. We are at a loss to conceive, why the disgraceful crime of *forgery*—a crime which in a commercial country like England is deemed *unpardonable*, especially in a merchant, is constantly laid to *Young Claransforth's* charge in the representation, whilst not the slightest mention is made of it in the printed copy.

The Countess of *Meervitz*, the counterpart of *Lady Mary Diamond*, appears in the original, as she does in Mrs. INCHBALD's play, in the character of an unprincipled female gambler. But, little as we are inclined to allow to Kotzebue that high rank in the dramatic world, which his admirers would fain contend for, we must, however, do him the justice to acknowledge, that he has proved himself possessed of too much insight into human nature, and the
secret

secret springs and workings of the soul, to suffer his *Countess* to play the silly part, which *Lady Diamond* does, when she entrusts the *loaded dice*, and the *letter*, which develops the plot against *Claransforth*, to the custody of a person passionately in love with the man, whom she seeks to ruin. In the management of this part of the plot, there seems to be a *wanton* and wilful refinement upon absurdity. Originally, *Lady Diamond* deposited these instruments of fraud in a Cabinet, which not being locked, furnished *Ellen* with the means of frustrating her villainy. But now, like a fool as well as a knave, she herself places them in *Ellen's* hands.

Ensign Metland is almost the only character in the play, in which we can trace the features of the original. But as there is reason to apprehend, that too minute a criticism in prose, might prove fatiguing to the reader, we shall conclude our remarks upon the *plot* and *conduct* of the several characters in Mrs. INCHBALD's New Comedy, with an extract from the Satirical Poem, entitled, *The Wise Man of the East, or the Apparition of Zoroaster, to the Theatrical Midwife of Leicester-fields*, a work, which though written by the Editor of the DRAMATIC CENSOR, he may, he trusts, recommend, without subjecting himself to the imputation of vanity, as containing the most ample and satisfactory *critique* upon the new play, that has yet appeared in print.

At

At the same time, that the Reader may have no cause of complaint, that he purchases extracts from a work, which he has already seen, an * additional quantity of pages will be given, more than sufficient to answer for the room, the extract from the printed publication occupies.

It may not be superfluous to add, that the *critique* is supposed to be spoken by *Zoroaster*, the reputed founder of the sect of Magicians.

Your *Quaker-scenes* a barren wit betray,
 And *Rachel Starch* had nearly damn'd your play.
 Even at that awful crisis—mark the deed !
 I stood your best of friends—a friend in need !
 Clapp'd (a) with both hands, and bade the
 play proceed.

Nor can I, Madam, more your hero prize,
 Your *cunning-man*—I cannot call him *wise*!

I'll

* Mr. DUTTON will never suffer a work which boasts the sanction of his name, to rank in the class of *catch-penny* publications.

(a) Every theatrical production, unless it be a downright outrage of good-manners and good-taste, ought, in our opinion, to claim a fair, candid and perfect hearing.

I'll were that name bestowed, where whim and
freak

A childish soul and idiot's brain bespeak;
One, who from mere (b) caprice must pass for dead;
And leaves his injur'd friend to beg his bread!

Who

(b) Nothing can be more unworthy the character of a *Wise-Man*, and considered in relation to its *actual*, but especially its *probable* consequences, more unjustifiable, than that part of the *Elder Claransforth's* (the pretended *Ava Theana*) conduct, which constitutes the leading incident, whereon hinges the entire plot of the New Comedy. His house happening to be burnt down the very night, in the evening of which *Metland* puts into his hands his whole fortune amounting to 12000l. (but for which the other is too busy to give a *receipt*, though not too busy to pocket the money) and the old fellow narrowly escaping with his life, by means of some under-ground communication known only to himself (perhaps he got into the common-sewer!) this *wise-man*, to indulge a silly whim of running about the town *incog.* passes a whole twelve-month for dead. His son of course, as the lawful heir, comes into immediate possession of his estate; and takes upon himself the whole management of his father's mercantile concerns, which we are given to understand, are of the most extensive nature, but which the folly and dissipated courses of this thoughtless young man seem likely very soon to reduce to utter ruin. In the mean time, *Metland* having received no vouchers for his 12000l. is involved in the deepest distress, and obliged to turn hackney-writer in his old age to keep himself and wife from starvation. But the profits of his penmanship not being adequate to his support, the deficiency must be made good by a proportion of the pay of his son, who
is

Who nearly brings to an (c) untimely end
His own, and eke the offspring of his friend!

Who

is an ensign in the army, and the wages of his daughter, who is waiting-maid to a lady of quality. The *wife man* all this time is well-informed of the distress under which his dear friend *Metland* labours, and which, indeed, is entirely owing to his own whim of passing for dead, without returning his friend's money, or furnishing him with documents to substantiate his claim; but he very *wisely* considers, that any friendly interference of this kind would defeat his mad scheme of being reputed dead, and therefore leaves the *Metlands* to struggle with poverty and wretchedness as well as they can. It is but justice to add, that Kotzebue is not accountable for these absurdities, the whole of this incident being the invention of Mrs. INCHBALD's romantic brain.

(c) On the first representation of the New Comedy, the catastrophe here alluded to, was within a very ace of being accomplished; *Ellen* having actually, in consequence of the abandoned conduct of the *wife-man's* son towards her, thrown herself into the Thames; whence, in the very nick of time, she is rescued by the old conjuror. The son, on receiving the intelligence, resolves to add suicide to his other crimes, from which he is only dissuaded by the *sangfroid* of *Timothy Starch*, who asks him, in what burying-ground he means to have his carcase interred? (after blowing out his brains) and who are to be his pall-bearers? The body of *Ellen* was on the first night exhibited, newly taken out of the river, on a shutter; but the disgustfulness of the scene, added to the absurdity of preaching over the poor girl for nearly an hour, instead of putting in practice the mode of treatment recommended in such cases by
the

Who, like grimalkin scenting out a mouse,
 Dodges (*d*) his hopeful son from house to house:
 On trifling causes, still renews his search;
 But when most wanted, leaves him in the lurch!
 Then lastly, in the very nick of time;
 The lady (*e*) mad; the son involv'd in crime;
 The elder *Metlands* raving for despair,
 And ensign *Charles* for—*Ruth*, the quaker fair!

Closes

the *Humane Society*, being too glaring to pass, even in a play manufactured from Kotzebue; this part of the farce has been very properly omitted in the succeeding representations.

(*d*) The *Wife-Man* expressly brags that he keeps a strict watch over his son, and hunts him out every where; and yet at the most critical moment, when his son takes the dishonourable step, which leads to all the misery set forth in the preceding note;—a step, of which the father is in a great measure apprized—the old *wife-acre*, with his usual unwillingness to prevent mischief, does not interfere in the remotest manner to save *Ellen* from his son's baseness, though he afterwards explicitly declares, that he knew of his taking her to a *house of ill fame*.

(*e*) It having been found inconvenient in the representation, for *Ellen* to throw herself into the water; recourse is had to a milder substitute; and the lady now goes *mad*, instead of *drowning* herself.

(*f*) Scarcely

Closes the farce, by throwing off disguise ;
 Bids *Ellen*, like himself, from (*f*) death arise !
 And wedlock's Gordian-knot between two
 couples ties.

But whether Dad avows himself too late ?
 Whether the son restores the fire's estate ?
 Or keeps it—now that Dad bestows a bride—
 For *lyings-in* and *christenings* to provide ?
 The drama says not—nor can I decide.

Shall such a man for wife and prudent pass,
 Because the lion's skin bedecks the ass !
 Is then his folly, or his crime the less,
 Because the dotard wears a sage's dress ?
 What !—though he wield his cane with graceful
 ease ?
 Emblem of cane *Theurgick*, fraught with (*g*)
 cheese !

What

(*f*) Scarcely half an hour before *Ellen's* translation from a *sick-bed* to the happy state of a *bride*, the *wise-man* informs us that the physicians have given her up; the lady being, as we before remarked, mad, with respect to her mind; and her bodily frame having sustained nearly an equal shock.

(*g*) Instead of a staff, the *Magi* carried a cane, the top of which was hollow, for the purpose of containing their diet, consisting chiefly of herbs and cheese. MUNDEN, who generally

What!—though as rites (*b*) initiative require,
He pass'd through burnings, and was purg'd by
fire?

What!—though observant of prophetic lay,
The old *wife-acre* (*i*) snatch'd himself away?

What!—though deliver'd from the scorching
flame,

He dropt his own, and took a (*k*) barbarous
name?

What!—though he afterwards alive appear,
Like me, up-rising from the funeral (*l*) bier?

No

rally is remarkable for dressing his characters well, appears with a large cane in his hand, the top of which comes nearly to the level of his nose: but whether it is furnished with cheese, we cannot pretend to say.

(*b*) These initiative rites consisted of twelve different degrees of mortification, amongst which are expressly mentioned, *burning*, blows. &c.

(*i*) This is a parody of one of the Oracles of Zoroaster.

Εαυτον ο πατηρ ηεπασειν.

(*k*) This idea is a *jeu d'esprit* upon another of these oracles.

Ονοματα βαρβαρα μηποτ' αλλαξης.

(*l*) Plato informs us that Zoroaster came to life again, after he had been dead ten days, and laid out on his funeral pile.

(*m*) There

No adept *he*, to pass the central space,
 Where (*m*) *un-zon'd* Gods the sev'n-fold chain embrace!
 Where springs the fount of light, which ambient
 hurl'd
 Pervades the upper and the lower world;
 No votary, *he* of wisdom's hallow'd school;
 To Reason's eye he stands confest—a fool!
 Not even his claim to *cunning* I admit;
 His cunning problematic as his wit.
 With hellebore the moon-struck idiot purge;
 Give him clean straw, strait-waistcoat, and the
 scourge!

As little in your *Rake* can I admire;
 The hopeful son of such a hopeful fire!
 Gay, thoughtless, lavish—that I freely pass;
 'Tis fashion—fashion too, to keep a lass.
 But to his vices not *one* foil appears;
 He's plung'd in baseness to his very ears.
 Hard-hearted villain!—can no honour bind?
 No sense of gratitude control thy mind?
Her would'st thou ruin?—*her*! who wrongs for-
 gave,
 And comes, thy guardian-angel, thee to save!

(*m*) There were two classes of deities in the Chaldaic system; the *un-zoned*, who were of a superior, and the *zoned*, of a subordinate, rank.

Think'st thou, I'd give thee *Ellen* for a wife?
No!—let me see thee first reform thy life!

Next for your *Metlands*—briefly let me scan
Their several merits, and proceed by plan.
The mother, gentle dame! is good enough:
The father much too testy, much too rough.
I can't approve his (*n*) language to his child—
Her morals blameless, and her temper mild!
Such conduct, as this language would proclaim,
Has many a girl confirm'd in guilt and shame.
And then his probity's so over-grown,
Poor, honest man! he dare not claim his own.

The son, a soldier, frank in speech and thought,
Speaks nobly, as a British soldier ought.

But

(*n*) From a firm conviction, that parental austerity has frequently proved the occasion of plunging a penitent female, who may have been seduced into a *first* crime, into a continuance and perseverance in guilt, even for life; we cannot refrain from reprobating the language which *Metland*, the father, holds out to his lovely daughter, from the mere idea of the possibility of her falling into indiscretion: “In that case, (he says) neither to her mind nor person am I a protector; nor is this *house* her home!” Is *this* the language of enlightened parental affection?

But much the cause perplex'd me, why the
youth

Is so (o) bewitch'd with that prim spinster *Ruth*?

Some anecdotes of former days should tell,

How first they met, and *why* in love they fell.

But here the author leaves us in the dark—

Perhaps they stroll'd together in the Park;

Perhaps, his scarlet-coat the damsel fir'd,

And he the damsel's prudish dress admir'd.

Perhaps, they found it rather warm above!

So drank a *fillibub*, and then made love!

As to *congenial hearts*, that kindly beat

In unison, and sympathetic meet;

No proof of that, no symptom can we trace,

I fear, they only know each other's *face*!

This sinks his character;—nor does the ease

With which he yields to (p) *Rachel's* meanness
please;

Nor

(o) The author leaves us totally in the dark as to the basis on which young *Metland's* passion for *Ruth* is founded; nor do we receive the slightest information how they first came into habits of intimacy.

(p) This alludes to the plot, into which the mother of *Ruth* inveigles the lover of that lady, to extort a bond for 5000l. from *Claransforth*, as a compensation for a breach of marriage. This disgraceful scene is, with respect to its principal features, omitted since the first representation.

Nor—when he seeks his rival to entrap,
Is this, methinks, a feather in his cap,

Ellen, I own, is my peculiar care;
Ellen is all that's lovely! all that's fair!
No spot, no blemish—'tis a perfect whole;
Not snow more pure, and *virgin* is her soul!
Tender and gentle, as the voice of love!
And innocent and guileless as the dove!
Graceful in action, and in thought refin'd;
She looks of heav'n! and heav'n adorns her mind!
Speaks, as when cherubs breathe their softest notes,
And borne on spicy gales the music floats!
Sweet, lovely angel!—late may kindred skies
Reclaim thee back from our admiring eyes!

Your *Lady Mary*—griev'd I am to say,
That “such things are!” supports her rank by
play!

A titled *Sharper*, lost to virtuous shame,
Whom none, I fear, but KENYON can reclaim!
But then her portrait is not strictly true;
Her (q) proxy better acts, than INCHBALD drew.

When

(q) MRS. DAVENPORT. This actress possesses the merit, which in the theatrical profession is no common one, of forming a right judgment of her own talents. She never seeks to step out of her proper sphere and line of acting. We think her performances entitled to considerable commendation.

When she attempts my *Ellen* to (r) beguile,
 Her want of penetration bids me smile.
 Thinks she that *Ellen*—sweet and lovely maid !
 Will league with *her*—her foul designs will aid ?
 Black as *My Lady* is ; her subtle pate
 Should better *Ellen's* look and heart translate :
 That heart, estrang'd from guile, and pure from
 sin !
 That look, which back reflects the purity within !

Your *Lawyer* has, what Lawyers want—a heart !
 No wonder then he (s) blunders in his part,
 But here no obloquy on you I mean ;
 'Tis well you do not comprehend the scene.
Bankwell is firm and staunch in honour's cause,
 And gains, as he deserves, sincere applause.

After

(r) The whole of this scene between Lady *Mary Diamond* and the lovely *Ellen* is vilely unnatural. That a woman of the world, like Lady *Diamond*, should, after such repeated proofs of *Ellen's* attachment to *Clarendon*—after her repeated refusal to be an accomplice in so infamous a scheme of plunder, that my lady after all this, should put into her hands the loaded dice, and the letter detailing the preconcerted plan of her lover's ruin—this, indeed, is such a glaring outrage of nature and of common sense, that we are astonished Mrs. INCHBALD should evince so little either of *nature* or of *art*, in the management of her plot.

(s) We believe it is customary on all occasions, when a seizure of goods is made, for a second person, besides the attorney, (we believe

After this ample analysis of the fable of the New Comedy, it only remains, that we add a few remarks on the respective merits of the performers. However ludicrous in itself the part of *Ava Thoana*, it must be acknowledged, that Mr. MUNDEN, (to adopt a homely, but energetic phrase) *made the most* of the character. Mr. Metland was ably personated by Mr. MURRAY; and Mr. H. JOHNSTONE did justice to the *Ensign*. But we were by no means satisfied with Mr. LEWIS's delineation of the *Younger Claransforth*. *News-paper-Critics*, acting under the influence of *venality*, may flatter his *vanity*, and extoll his *feeble* efforts; but BOLD, IMPARTIAL judges must condemn his temerity, in undertaking a part for which neither his natural bias, nor his *years* conspire to qualify him. *Ellen* must be little better than a *lunatic*, to place her affections on such a *weather-beaten* beau. We would advise Mr. LEWIS to profit from a satirical reflection thrown out in the Comedy of *Management*. When Mr. Miff, P. M. and M. P. observes, that being *manager* of a Theatre, he takes all the *good parts* to himself, we could not

believe a broker,) to assist at making out the inventory. But in the *Wife Man of the East*, where no regard is paid to custom or propriety, from first to last, Mr. Lawley, the attorney, comes to execute this office without any assistant. We are happy to augur from this mistake, that Mrs. INCHEALD has never acquired any *practical* and *experimental* knowledge upon this point.

not repress a smile at the propriety of the allusion to the present M. P. of Covent-Garden. To see Mr. LEWIS *aping* sentimental and pathetic parts affords a practical illustration of the *pot-house* hieroglyphic of the *Bear and the Fiddle*.

The blunt honesty of *Bankwell* is well depicted in the acting of Mr. DAVENPORT. The wife of this gentleman sustained the character of *Lady Mary Diamond* with spirit and address. Mrs. JOHNSON acted the part of *Mrs. Metland* with feeling : and Miss MURRAY, as *Ellen*, displayed talents, which have long been strangers to the Stage. *Ruth Starck* found in Mrs. H. JOHNSTONE a representative, whose manner and style of acting, in a great measure, blinded the audience to the imperfections and downright folly of the part she sustained. Of Mrs. MATTOCKS we cannot speak in such favourable terms. She is much too pert and flippant for a quaker. Mr. KNIGHT succeeded much better in his delineation of *Timothy Starck*.

The prologue to this play is perfectly *harmless* ; but the Epilogue abounds in *equivoques* and *double-entendres* of too palpable allusion to pass without animadversion. We are well persuaded, that the writer has not transgressed the bounds of decency with design ; but though he may plead FARQUHAR'S example, in apology for the two objectionable lines,
which

which have been altered in the delivery, he should, independent of all other considerations, remember, that a speech may be perfectly in character in the mouth of a dissipated libertine, a recruiting officer, and a professed rake, which cannot be spoken with propriety by a virtuous female, still less by a female of habits peculiarly rigid and demure.

The language of the *Wise Man of the East* will form the subject of discussion, on a future occasion.

The New Pantomime succeeded the Play. It does not appear that the Managers deem scenic propriety an object worthy their attention, as the absurdities and inconsistencies, which we pointed out in our First Number, are suffered to remain in their original state. In the performance of this evening, nonsense was reduced to system and folly wrought up to its highest pitch, from a mistaken compliment, we presume, to the august visitors.

The Music of the *Volcano*, is, according to the different situations and incidents of the piece, alternately bold and spirited, or plaintive and soothing, but always characteristic and appropriate. It merits the praise of elegant composition, and reflects great credit on the talents of Mr. MOOREHEAD.

DRURY.

P.

DRURY-LANE, *Thursday, January 16. 1800.*

CASTLE SPECTRE (M. G. Lewis.) LODOISKA.

We are happy to see Miss BIGGS make a proper use of the opportunity she now enjoys of advancing her reputation as an actress. In addition to natural talents, she possesses, what is not always the concomitant of ability, indefatigable diligence. Illness itself, unless it wears a serious aspect, is not capable of deterring her from the discharge of her professional duty.

COVENT-GARDEN, *Thursday, January 17, 1800.*

JOANNA. (Cumberland, Kotzebue & * Co.)

THE INTRIGUING CHAMBERMAID. (Fielding.)

The representation of this long-promised *Spectacle* at length took place, and *My Lady of Montfaucon* made her first appearance this evening on the boards of Covent-Garden, in an *English dress*. The *chimerical* celebrity of the German author, and the *established* reputation of the British dramatist, who has been induced to *adopt* this foreign bantling, added to the avowed intentions of the manager to start, in the person of *Joanna*, a formidable rival to the victorious *Hero of Peru*, and the insinuation, so industriously circulated,

* By the Co. we mean the Machinists, Scene-painters, and the whole *et cetera* of the firm.

circulated, through the medium of the news-papers, that this play was undertaken under the immediate patronage and at the express desire of a certain LUTRIOUS PERSONAGE—these, and a variety of collateral causes, acting in concert, to whet the edge of public curiosity, and wind up expectation to its highest pitch; the production of this piece was looked to with a degree of interest and solicitude, which received additional ardour from repeated procrastination. The editor of THE DRAMATIC CENSOR, therefore, conceives it a duty, which he owes to the public at large, to canvass the merits of this play *boldly, amply*, and without any regard to *private* feelings, or *popular* phrenzy. “*Dinah is my Aunt; but Truth is my Sister.*”

In volunteering the arduous and ungrateful office of a public Censor, there is but one path, which an *upright* Critic has to pursue, if he wishes to avoid the accusation of *partiality*, one the one hand, and the charge of *unjust rigour*, on the other. This is to give an *analysis* of the work he reviews, previous to his critical strictures, by which mode of procedure the reader is enabled to form an opinion of his own, and in a great measure to ascertain the justice or impropriety of the writer's subsequent remarks. In this view, we shall, (after briefly premising, that the fable of a Drama is to be considered in a *two-fold* light, as a simple tale and story, told by the author in the best manner he can, in the first place, and

and, secondly, as a story, which, by the laws of dramatic composition, ought to be connected in all its parts, and strictly reconcileable to probability, and the usages of life) give a concise sketch of the successive incidents which constitute the plot, and then proceed to a regular detail of the whole, Act by Act.

As a list of the *Dramatis Personae* tends greatly to the elucidation of a *New Play* in all its several bearings and capacities, we shall preface our Analysis with that necessary article of intelligence, a list of the

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Albert, <i>Lord of Thurn</i>	- - -	Mr. Pope,
Lazarra, <i>A Knight</i>	- - -	Mr. Holman,
Darbony, <i>Leader of a Band of armed</i>	}	Mr. Incledon,
<i>Soldiers</i>		
Wensel, <i>Castellan of Belmont</i>	-	Mr. Waddy,
Philip, <i>his Son</i>	- - -	Mr. H. Johnstone,
Guntram,	- - -	Mr. Emery.
Hermit,	- - -	Mr. Murray.
Wolf, <i>a Servant to Albert</i>	- -	Mr. Munden.
Romuald, <i>a Servant to Lazarra</i>	-	Mr. Rees.
Reinhard, <i>belonging to Wensel</i>	-	Mr. King.
Henry, <i>Son to Albert and Joanna,</i>	-	
<i>Servant to Lazarra</i>	- - -	Mr. Curties.
1st Soldier,	- - -	M. Klanert.
2d Soldier,	- - -	Mr. Atkins.
3d Soldier,	- - -	Mr. Thompson.

Old

Old Man,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Davenport.
Shepherd,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Gardner.
Mountaineer	-	-	-	-	Mr. Claremont.
Joanna, <i>Wife to Albert,</i>	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Pope.
Eloisa, <i>supposed Daughter to Guntram</i>	-	-	-	-	Mrs. H. Johnstone.
Eugene, <i>a Page</i>	-	-	-	-	Miss Waters.
Girl,	-	-	-	-	Miss Cox.
Old Woman,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Whitmore.

Guards, Officers, &c.

The Scene is laid in Switzerland, and the *Fable*, considered merely in the light of a * *Tale*, is simply this.

Albert, Lord of *Thurn*, is married to *Joanna*, a Lady, whose beauty has made a fatal impression upon the heart of *Lazarra*,
an

* Although *haste* and *want of time* can not, in the general scale of literary enterprize, be admitted as a competent apology for inaccuracy and error, there are, notwithstanding, certain cases, in which an author may justly claim indulgence, on the strength of this plea. As the Editor of THE DRAMATIC CENSOR does not see *with other people's eyes*, but trusts entirely to his *own judgment*, and as he takes the *whole responsibility* of the work upon himself, *writes himself every line of the publication*, he may, he hopes, throw himself upon the candour of the Reader for any venial errors, which he may chance to commit in detailing the plot, and occasionally quoting the dialogue of a New Play from memory, under the disadvantages of a *first representation*. It only remains for him to add, that any errors he may be guilty of, he is ready to acknowledge and correct with cheerfulness the moment they are pointed out to him.

an Italian Knight, who becomes acquainted with her prior to her nuptials. *Lazarra* is likewise personally known to Lord *Albert*, by whom, it appears, he was twice vanquished in the lists of honour. The shame of discomfiture abets the resentment of unsuccessful love, and spurs him on to revenge his disgrace, by dispossessing his Rival of his Castle and his wife. For this purpose he forms a league with *Darbony*, the leader of a gang of banditti, who readily undertakes to promote *Lazarra's* designs upon the lady, on condition of receiving a principal share in the plunder. The castle is accordingly attacked and carried by assault. *Albert* escapes, though faint and wounded, and applies to *Wensel*, Castellan of Belmont, for protection. *Wensel* is a person, from whom *Albert* formerly has received injuries of the grossest nature; a person whom he had defeated as an enemy, but, instead of resenting his wrongs, had generously pardoned, taking his son *Pbillip* into his own family, as a hostage of the father's allegiance. This son he had unconditionally released the very morning of the day on which the attack is made on his castle. Relying, therefore on *Wensel's* gratitude, he seeks an asylum under the shelter of his roof; but acts of kindness only serve to increase *Wensel's* hatred towards his benefactor. He arrests Lord *Albert*, and bargains with *Lazarra* to put him to death, in return for certain grants which *Lazarra*, as Lord of *Thurn* by right of conquest, agrees to make him.

Albert, on *Wensel's* return from *Thurn*, where he has been stipulating with *Lazarra* on the terms for which he engages to behead his prisoner, is informed of his doom, and ordered to prepare himself for execution against midnight. 'Tis in vain that *Philip* intercedes with his father for *Albert's* life; *Wensel* persists in his sanguinary purpose, and even proceeds to threats against his own son, when he is suddenly seized with a fit and carried off by his attendants to his chamber. This furnishes *Philip* with the means of possessing himself of the keys of *Albert's* dungeon, whilst his father remains in a state of insensibility

bility. But at the very critical moment, when he prepares to deliver his patron, he is accosted by a *Hermit*, with the distressing tidings, that *Eloisa* (the mistress of his affections) is bartered by her savage parent *Guntram* to *Darbony*, and that their nuptials are to take place that very night. This intelligence gives birth to a severe conflict in the breast of *Philip* between love to his mistress, and his affection to Lord *Albert*, but after an agonizing scene of doubt and incertitude, duty triumphs over love, and he dismisses the *Hermit*, with a firm resolution to suffer no consideration of self-interest and personal gratification to interfere with his pious determination to save the life of Lord *Albert*.

Deprived of *Philip's* co-operation, the *Hermit* resolves to undertake himself the task of preventing *Eloisa's* marriage with *Darbony*. In this design he succeeds by a pious fraud; working on *Guntram's* avarice by a pretended message from Lord *Albert*, who, it is stated, lies at the point of death in the *Hermit's* cell, and wishes to deposit jewels and other articles of value in the hands of *Guntram*. The walk being inconvenient to the old miser, he is persuaded to send his daughter in his stead, who thus escapes the matrimonial fetters, which were to have chained her for life to a man she detested.

Meanwhile Lord *Albert*, having escaped from his dungeon, assembles with *Philip's* assistance a band of Mountaineers, and, aided by the peasantry under the command of his faithful servant *Wolfe* storms the castle. A fierce combat takes place, which terminates with a personal encounter between *Albert* and *Lazarra*. The former is disarmed by his antagonist; but at this critical juncture, this

—*dignus vindice nodus.*

Lady *Joanna* rushes upon the stage, and puts an end to the contest by plunging a dagger in the heart of *Lazarra*. Prior to this catastrophe a disclosure had taken place by which the *Hermit* is proved to be *Theodore* the rightful lord of Thurn, whom *Albert's* father had dispossessed of his estates, and *Eloisa* is recognized

nized as *Theodore's* child and heiress, not the daughter, as she hitherto had been thought, of the mercenary and brutal *Guntram*.

Such is the outline of the plot of the New Play, which we shall next proceed to trace in its several relations and dependencies. But the great length to which we have already exceeded the limits of our publication, compels us to defer this part of our plan till the next Number. We shall therefore confine our remarks at present chiefly to the musical department of the piece. After the *prologue

*As we shall have frequent occasion to allude to the words of this prologue in the sequel, we have deemed it expedient to subjoin a Copy.

THE scenes, that soon will open to your view,
In their first sketch a foreign author drew :
If merely tracing his inventive thought,
We set *translation's* servile task at nought,
All, who can judge our labours, must confess
Originality had made it less.
Our Dramatists, you know, in every age
Have copied from the French and Spanish stage.
We have done less—for, save in plot alone,
The work from top to bottom is our own.
If thus towards you in conscience we are clear,
There's nothing from our foreign friend to fear.
We've given him all our care—with music's aid,
And painting's art, his splendid scene array'd ;
That when his Muse imperial shall be shown
Audience not less illustrious than her own,
She may not have it in her pow'r to say,
A *British* Stage disgrac'd a *German* Play.

spoke by Mr. MURRAY, the *Overture* commenced with an energetic *bravura* subject, in unison and octaves, interspersed with responsive imitations, and other passages of relief. The second movement is a *quintetto* for two horns, two hautboys, and a bassoon, succeeded by a grand and full march. The general effect was striking, and evinced profundity of science.

After a march and grand procession, in which *Darbony's* soldiers parade before *Lazarra*, * INCLEDON addresses

The author of our plot from married life
 Selects his heroine, a virtuous wife.
 This character, as fearing to advance,
 Fiction t'avoid, he paints as a Romance.
 We, under no such terrors, vouch it true,
 And, for its *living* model point to you;
 Asserting you in grace and goodness show
 All that was lovely centuries ago.
 Conscious, though wives of old were more demure,
 Your eyes may sparkle, yet your hearts be pure.
 Here we conclude——for music now prepares
 Her better prologue to more moving airs.
 If *knotted oaks* will bend to her appeal,
 Need she despair, that *Hearts of Oak* will feel.

• After reciting the Prologue, Mr. MURRAY came forward to crave the indulgence of the audience in favour of Mr. INCLEDON, whom he stated to be labouring under a "*kind of intellectual derangement*", which rendered him apprehensive of failing that "*night in the accuracy he was always so anxious to show.*"——

This

dresses his troops in a martial song, *con spirito*, which partakes highly of the heroic. The *solo* is suddenly broken in upon by a *Chorus*; and a characteristic *symphony* concludes the Act.

Act I I. opens with a view of a cavernous, desolate country. INCLEDON in a *Recitative*, which is taken up by HILL, gives the order for mustering the troop. The soldiers rush from their caves at the call, with the words: "We come! we come! we come! &c. This *Chorus* is interrupted and relieved by a *larghetto solo*, in the *minor* of the original key, by INCLEDON, accompanied by ELEY on the violincello. This Act closes, like the preceding, with an appropriate *symphony*.

The third Act may certainly lay claim to many striking beauties, but it is as strongly characterized by glaring defects and absurdities, which would disgrace the pen of the lowest scribbler. The *Hermit's* soliloquy, is a palpable, but feeble imitation of *Rolla's* speech in *Pizarro*. and the *anachronism* the author commits in interlarding a speech supposed to be spoken

This *alarming* apology, and the melancholy air, with which it was delivered, led the audience to conclude, that poor INCLEDON had lost his wits, and that probably, he might play some mad pranks; but INCLEDON soon convinced them, on his appearance, that his head and voice were in as perfect order as ever.

ken in the Fourteenth Century, with the leading events which mark the close of the Eighteenth, (we allude to the *Hermit's* imprecation against an impious race, who after destroying their King, declare war against the Majesty of Heaven, because their levelling system will not admit of a superior, even in the skies) is an unpardonable out rage of historic propriety. Nor can the stratagem he employs to *couzen Guntram*, and prevent his daughter's marriage with *Darbony*, leaving (in direct violation of *Rolla's* sentiment: "The God of Justice sanctions no evil as a step towards good") the "*cause to sanctify the means*;" be considered in any other light, than as a clumsy trick, which evinces the poverty of the writer's imagination. None but a madman or a fool, would hope to impose upon an arrant knave, by telling him, that the person to whom his villainous character is fully known, and who holds him in merited detestation, has selected him for the depository of his most valuable effects, his jewels, and his gold. If the plot of a Drama is to be carried on by such improbable incidents as this, the trade of a Play-wright must be a most lucrative employment, for any blockhead, who can write, is adequate to the task.

INCLEDON'S song to ELOISA, which was deservedly *encored*, is in *b* flat major, common time, and

and contains two divisions: the principal *accompaniment* is a bassoon *obligato*, by MACKINTOSH, running in contrary motion to the voice. The symphony which concludes this act consists of a movement in common time, *agitato*, relieved by a *trio penferoso* for two hautboys, and a bassoon, after which the first movement is resumed.

In Act IV, Miss WATERS, in the character of a page, has a plaintive song in *d* minor, (three crotchets) which is pettily composed, but received very little charms from her singing. It seems, the excessive modesty of this lady has long stoutly remonstrated against, what many of her sex are too partial to, *wearing the breeches*. This difficulty, even now, seems to be but *partially* overcome, for the dress in which she makes her appearance, its such a strange kind of *non-descript*, that the ladies almost unanimously voted her of the *epicene* or doubtful gender. The words of the song, are in the true *Namby Pamby* style, and would do little credit even to a *Bell-Man*. On this subject we shall not fail to enlarge in our next.

TOWNSEND's part was originally intended for MUNDEN, but did not, it seems, come within the compass of that gentleman's voice. It blends the martial and the festive strain, opening in common time, *con-spirito*, and changing to 6—8 *allegretto*

legretto, Ere we dismiss this song, we would beg leave to ask Mr. CUMBERLAND, whether *old stingo* was a common beverage with the inhabitants of Switzerland in the Fourteenth Century? This seems likewise, to favour a little of an anachronism. The concluding symphony partakes of the style of *Geminiani*.

Act V. presents a still stronger violation of historic truth. *Joanna* informs us, that not being able to sleep, she remained awake, the lamp was burning, and the *Book of Life* (meaning, it is presumed, the *Bible*) lay open. She read &c. Now it is a well-known fact, that for a century subsequent to the period given as the date of this Romance, the Bible was not translated into the modern languages of Europe. The *Latin Vulgate* was in use, and even that was not in the hands of the laity. *Joanna* must have been a very *high-learned lady*, and possessed of singular opportunities to read the Book of Life. When classical scholars are guilty of such absurdities, what may we not expect from the common herd of Dramatic writers?

The *finale*, which employs the whole power of the Band, is a Chorus, in which the Violin *accompaniments* are brilliant and spirited. But, greatly as we approve of Mr. BUSBY's performance in the aggregate, we cannot refrain from condemning the
glaring

glaring absurdity he has been guilty of, in the introduction of *Drums* and *Trumpets* to an Air, which expressly begins with

“ Roaring War is gone to sleep,

“ *Drums* and *trumpets* silence keep !”

We cannot, however, pressed as we are for time and room, close our remarks, without advising Mr. CUMBERLAND to correct a few grammatical blunders, which mar the dialogue of his piece. We several times noticed the substitution of *if* for *whether*. Mrs. H. JONSTONE, as *Eloisa*, says to *Theodore*, “ Tell me, if (*whether*) it was nature inspired me to believe and call thee father ? *Joanna*, likewise, with all her knowledge of the *Latin*, is several times guilty of the same error.

Mr. CUMBERLAND, we are persuaded, will agree with us, that *whose* is the genitive case of the pronoun *who*, and properly only applicable to persons : Yet we met with a frequent misapplication of the word.

Albert in Act I. anticipates the “ day of trouble, of *whose* coming (he says) I have awful warning !”

Lazarra in Act II. addresses *Joanna* : “ I am come to free you from these chains, *whose* burden hangs so heavily on you.”

In

In Act IV. *Joanna* says : I would prefer the vilest dungeon, *whose* pestilential vapour, &c."

We would lastly recommend to the author to suppress the pointed allusions to Holy Writ, which he puts into the mouth of his *Dramatis Personæ*. We hear of the *Sacrifice of Cain*, and various other passages from the Bible are literally quoted. *MUNDEN*, as *Wolfe*, in the midst of a ludicrous speech, introduces scripture—" Rogues are wiser *in their generation*, than we dull downright fellows are in ours." He should have said boldly "*the children of light*." We shall soon expect to see the Bible dramatized; and brought upon the stage.

N. B. We shall resume our *Critique* upon the New Play in the next Number, when we propose to scan the merit of the dialogue, and the deserts of the several Performers.